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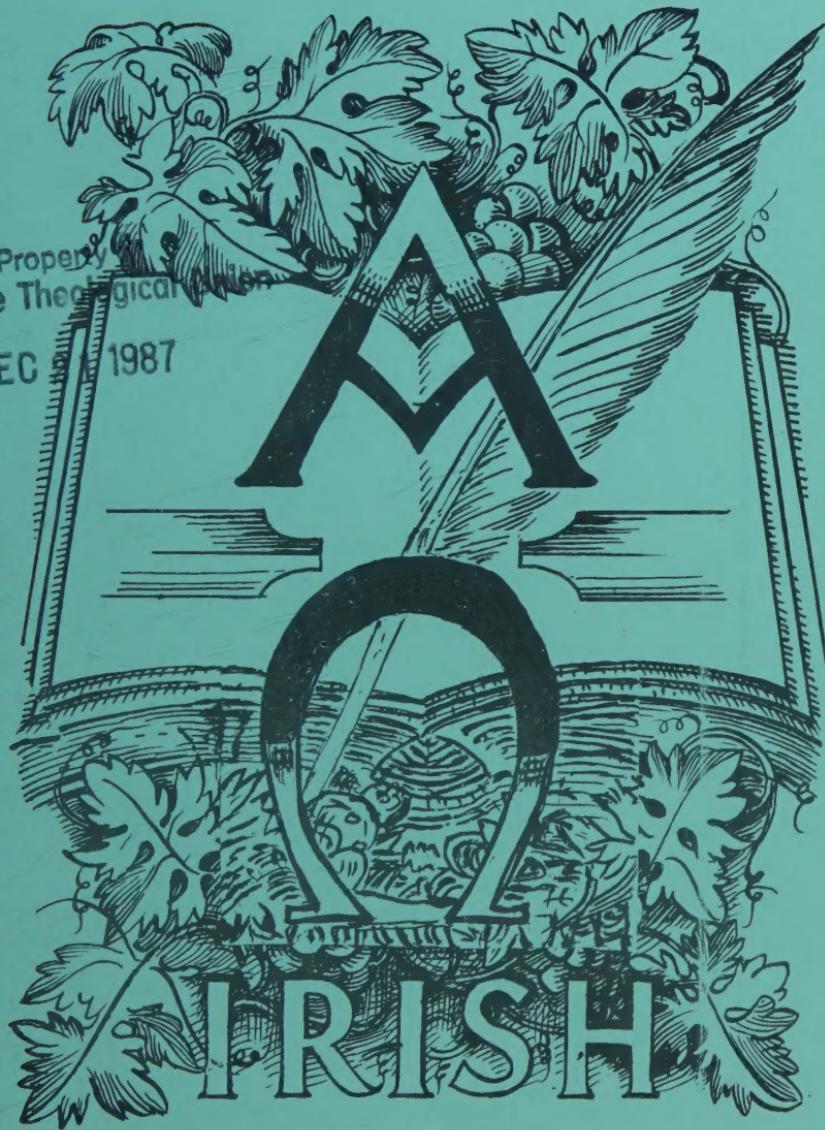
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# IRISH BIBLICAL STUDIES

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Union Theological College  
Belfast BT7 1JT N. Ireland

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**Contents**

Hamilton Moore, *The Book of Revelation* 158-174

E.A. Russell, *The New Jerusalem Bible and  
Modern Translations* 175-185

W.D. Bailie, *Presbyterian Worship in Ulster*

*Prior to the Introduction*

*of the Westminster Directory*

*in 1647* 186-208

The Book of the Revelation has been described as "the finest christian specimen of apocalyptic literature". Such a claim prompts the discussion of three important questions. First, is Revelation an apocalypse to be classified as belonging to the apocalyptic genre? Secondly, is it christian? And finally, how has the apocalyptic imagery and the apocalyptic world-view been modified by christian adaptation in Revelation, in the light of the Christ-event. In this chapter we will attempt an examination of these topics.

Is Revelation an Apocalypse?

The Book of the Revelation opens with the words ἡγέρηται ἡγεμόνης οὐρανοῦ. The term ἡγεμόνης which often in the New Testament means nothing more than the usual theological idea of revelation,<sup>2</sup> has been taken by scholars and since the early part of the nineteenth century, applied in a more specialized sense to a type of Jewish literature, mostly from the inter-testamental period, dealing with the secrets of the end time.<sup>3</sup> These writings have become known as apocalypses. Since the term itself has been taken from Revelation 1v1 it would be expected that this book also would be identified by all as an apocalypse. But this has been by no means universally the case. Objection to seeing Revelation as an apocalyptic book was expressed, for example by Kallas<sup>4</sup> who argued that its attitude towards suffering was different from that of the apocalypses. In such works sufferings come from forces opposed to God and these forces, which God will ultimately crush, are to be withstood. By contrast, in Revelation and other Jewish writings suffering comes from God and is to be submitted to, not resisted. Jones,<sup>5</sup> in reply was convinced that the situation was more complex than Kallas allowed and insists that there are passages in Revelation (and even in the apocalyptic literature as well) where suffering is regarded as an evil inflicted by the enemies of God (Rev. 1v9; 2v13; 6v9-11). Therefore the validity of Kallas' distinction must be questioned.

Many others since Kallas and Jones have expressed their own views concerning the links between Revelation and apocalyptic. Hill<sup>6</sup>acknowledges that there are certain features in the book which are commonly regarded as evidence of its sharing in the apocalyptic tradition. The imagery of the book, occasionally weird and grotesque, its determinism in which the plan of God is unalterably laid down (the book of the seven seals), and its dualism (between Christ and Satan, the church and the world) betray the influence of the apocalyptic genre. Again its insistence on the imminence of the End and the interest in the End-time events brings us face to face with the apocalyptic world of ideas.<sup>7</sup> But do these features make the book as a whole apocalyptic, or is the apparatus of apocalyptic taken over and made to serve a purpose other than that normally served in apocalyptic literature? Hill insists that there are certain features in Revelation which single it out from other apocalyptic writings. The book is not pseudonymous for, whoever "John" may be, he is known to the churches he addresses and writes under his own name and authority. Again the book nowhere lays claim to fictitious antiquity with esoteric or secret knowledge said to have been sealed up and secretly preserved from olden times, but rather claims to be an open, unsealed message and exhortation related to the present and immediate future.<sup>8</sup> Hill suggests that the work stands closer to the prophetic tradition than to the apocalypses. He finds support for this view in the author's own description of the book (1v3; 22v7,10,18f), the similar method of opening to that of prophetic books (cf Is.1v1), Amos 1v1, 3v7), his casting of himself as a prophet through whom the Spirit speaks (e.g. 2v7,11,17,19), and in his claim to have experienced a clear prophetic call (ch.10, cf Ezk.2v8-3v3). Hill is attracted by Conblin's<sup>9</sup> claim that the intention in Ch.10 is to suggest that with John there is a renewal or recommencement of prophecy if ΠΑΛΙΝ(v11) is capable of bearing this significance. For Hill John's understanding of his prophetic role may be reflected in the phrases ἐγείρομαι ἐν πνεύματι (1v10; 4v2) and ὑπέγκειτο ἐν πνεύματι (17v3,21v10)

and in his bearing witness to the ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ (the "word" - λόγος) and in his identification of that witness as λόγος τῆς προφητείας Hill mentions von Rad's<sup>10</sup> differentiation between prophecy and apocalyptic - the former seeing God acting within history, the latter, only at the end, - and is convinced that the prophetic Hilsgeschechthe is the view which underlies the book of the Revelation. John's starting point is the saving act of God in Christ. Thus, Hill is convinced that the author of Revelation considered himself a prophet and, while he employs much of the traditional apparatus of apocalyptic, he presents us with a writing prophetic in character and intention.<sup>11</sup>

Morris<sup>12</sup> also admits that apocalyptic characteristics are to be found throughout the Revelation. He mentions its symbolism, its eager anticipation of the setting up of the kingdom, the emphasis on angels and revelations made through them. Yet he also highlights, as Hill, important differences. The book is a prophecy, with no glossing over the offences of christians but rather stern demands for repentance. Again as with apocalyptic, Revelation looks for the End, yet contrary to apocalyptic sees God as having wrought out redemption in history. The really critical thing has already taken place. John sees Christ as victorious and as having won the victory through His death. Thus, while Revelation has connections with apocalyptic it is distinct. "It is a Christian writing setting forth what God has done in Christ and what he will yet do and using something of the apocalyptic method to bring all this out".<sup>13</sup>

Collins<sup>14</sup> in a persuasive article discusses the distinctive features which Revelation, the Apocalypse, is said to possess to establish whether they are merely superficial variants one might find within the genre or point to a distinctive type of literature. He considers the lack of pseudonymity and ex eventu prophecies, and the question of esoterism. As far as pseudonymity is concerned Collins acknowledges that some regard this as an essential feature of apocalyptic and so would exclude Revelation from the genre.<sup>15</sup> He explains that its use in the Jewish

apocalypses is usually related to the decline in prophecy in post-exilic Judaism, and was necessary if the Jewish visionaries and their writings were to have real influence.<sup>16</sup> But since in earliest Christianity an authortive status was again accorded to prophecy Collins maintains that the author of Revelation felt free to disperse it. A revelation of Jesus Christ, given to an angel would be acceptable to his readers without any added authority. Thus, in departing from the use of pseudonymity John merely dropped one of the accrediting devices of apocalyptic style found to be superfluous in the historical context, and the omission is not sufficient to indicate a new genre.<sup>17</sup> Again the purpose of ex eventu prophecy - according to Collins not a constant feature of Jewish apocalypses,<sup>18</sup> was to establish the predetermination of history and the imminence of the end. In early Christianity, however the proximity of the eschaton was scarcely in doubt. The belief was widespread that the last days had been ushered in by the death and resurrection of Christ. Therefore a Christian apocalypticist in the New Testament period did not have to convince his readers that they were living in the last days, and thus the use of ex eventu prophesies was superfluous. Finally, on the question of esoterism Collins notes that much has been made of the fact that Revelation is a circular letter, while the apocalypses are often seen as esoteric in character.<sup>19</sup> He is convinced that the contrast between the "open" Revelation (22v10) and the sealed Jewish apocalypses is more apparent than real, for the esoterism of the Jewish writings is a by-product of the device of pseudonymity. If a book was allegedly written hundreds of years before its publication, some means must be found to explain why it was out of circulation for so long. But in the real author's day the contents were to be revealed and explained rather than kept for a closed circle. (Collins mentions the maskilim in Daniel who must "make the many understand" and 2 Apoc. Bar. which is punctuated by Baruch's preaching to the people, clearly on the basis of the revelation he had received (31-34; 44-47; 77; 78-87). In the light of these considerations

Collins maintains that the major points at which Revelation may be contrasted with the Jewish apocalypses do not represent a major change in perspective but are superficial differences. Their absence does not involve us in a rejection of either the forms or values of the Jewish apocalypses.<sup>20</sup>

Fiorenza<sup>21</sup> approaches the question of the genre of Revelation by a discussion of its complex literary type. Did John intend to create a liturgy, a drama, a cosmic myth, prophetic book, an apocalypse, or are these all used to fill out the epistolary framework which reflects his true literary intention? Some have seen the book as patterned in the form of a liturgy, the Jewish temple liturgy or the Jewish calendar of feasts<sup>22</sup> or a eucharistic or Pascal liturgy.<sup>23</sup> For Fiorenza even a superficial comparison of a ritual book with Revelation makes it clear that all such proposals force a liturgical pattern in the text although that is not to deny that liturgical symbols and forms are some of the structural components John used in its composition.<sup>24</sup> As for seeing Revelation patterned after the stages and scenes of the imperial games<sup>25</sup> there is little evidence, but proposals that the book reflects the influence of Greek dramatic forms are plausible particularly since it has dramatis personae, stage props, chorus, a plot and a tragic-comic ending, and the hymns appear to be used like the choruses of the Greek drama when they comment on a compliment the visions and auditions of the book.<sup>26</sup> For Fiorenza, however, these dramatic elements are also simply component elements and do not constitute its complex literary type. This is true also of the language of myth<sup>27</sup> used in Revelation, (eg. sacred books, stars, animal figures, the birth of the divine child, sacred marriage, the divine polis and the divine warrior); here again we have another component in the overall structure.

What of Revelation as a prophetic book or an apocalypse? Fiorenza is convinced that the author sees himself as a prophet and his work "a word of prophecy". He employs most of the traditional prophetic "forms" eg. vision reports messenger speeches, prophetic oracles, symbolic actions, laments and durses, announcements of judgment and proclam-

ations of salvation. Yet Fiorenza acknowledges that apocalyptic works often contain prophetic forms and it is therefore difficult to distinguish the two types of literature. As far as Revelation is concerned an either - or solution appears out of place for two reasons. The first is that Jewish apocalypticism integrates the prophetic-historical and the mythopoeic-cultic perspective and forms.<sup>28</sup> Prophecy understood divine activity as involving a movement from promise to fulfilment in history; the mythopoeic view tended to eliminate time and history operating in the realm of timeless vision. Jewish apocalyptic in combining both did not eliminate time as ancient myth or reduce itself to a circular movement reenacting again and again the actions of the Gods but remained bound to a linear development toward a promised goal. However, concerning Revelation, Fiorenza is convinced that the prophetic element in apocalyptic appears to dominate. "Language and elements of the combat myth pattern are without doubt found....Yet the author appears to have known this pattern through the mediation of the O.T. prophetic books...the language and pattern of divine warfare appears to be subordinated to the judicial language and patterns of prophetic judgment".<sup>29</sup> The second reason why Revelation cannot be called exclusively prophetic or apocalyptic is that since the early christians conceived of themselves as a prophetic community, apocalyptic imagery and patterns were used to serve prophetic admonition and interpretation and the Apocalypse is an example of this. The author begins his book with exhortation and interpretation of the christian situation in the form of a prophetic vision (1v9 - 3v22) and ends with visionary promise and exhortation (19v11-22v9). Again the central chapters of Revelation (10-14) are explicitly characterized as prophetic interpretation of the christian community's situation.

Is the Revelation just a book of prophecy then, with this element overriding all other elements, dramatic, liturgical, apocalyptic? Fiorenza notes that while the book begins with an introduction similar to Old Testament Prophetic books (cf Amos 1v1-2 with Revelation's superscription (1v1-3) and motto (1v7-8)) indicating both content and tone, yet inserted between the traditional prophetic form of introduction is

the prescript similar to that of the Pauline letters (1v4-6). The book is thus seen as an apostolic open letter to the communities of Asia minor, using dramatic, liturgical, mythopoeic, prophetic apocalyptic and christian language, set within an epistolary framework, which underscores the authority of the work.<sup>30</sup> Support for this view of Revelation is found in Fiorenza's understanding of the structure and composition of the work. She finds here the use of a numerical structure (the seven letters and three series of eschatological plagues) combining a cyclic form of repetition, involving the technique of intercalation<sup>31</sup> with an end-oriented movement which is interrupted by interludes of visions and hymns. This approach to structure enables the small prophetic scroll of ch.10 to retain its important central position,<sup>32</sup> allows the seven letters to be viewed as integral to the book and places the whole work within its proposed epistolary form. Thus the whole complex type of Revelation, involving many elements is integrated into a prophetic-apostolic letter - a convincing claim.

Is Revelation an apocalypse therefore? Yes if we follow Collins; but it is also a prophecy, as Hill maintained, and an apostolic letter as Fiorenza has demonstrated. Perhaps we may fall back upon Beasley-Murray's suggestion<sup>33</sup> that we recognise the uniqueness of Revelation, for within the first five verses of the prologue John has employed these three different categories of composition. The first word he pens is ἡπικαλλύψις in v3 he calls his work a "prophecy", and then in v4 proceeds as if he were writing "an epistle". Beasley-Murray maintains "John's book takes its unusual character from its combination in a unique fashion of three of these forms".<sup>34</sup>

#### Is it Christian?

Many doubts have been expressed about the inclusion of the Book of Revelation in the New Testament canon and it has been regarded as sub-christian if not a-christian in content and tone. These difficulties are not just a modern phenomenon, - witness the problems Revelation experienced in being admitted into the christian canon at the first<sup>35</sup> and note attitudes at the time of the Reformation i.e.

Luther's comment "I cannot find Christ (i.e. Christ in the gospel) in the book of the Revelation",<sup>36</sup> and Calvin's doubts, when he passed over it in eloquent silence in his exposition of the New Testament. In more recent times Dodd<sup>37</sup> claimed that the excessive emphasis on the future had the effect of relegating to a secondary place the elements of the gospel (the Kerygma), which are the most distinctive to Christianity. The Book is evidence of our relapse from realized eschatology to pre-christian Jewish eschatology, which had adapted the whole apparatus of Jewish apocalyptic. The book's conception of the character of God and His attitude to man falls far below the level not only of the teaching of Jesus (His proclamation of the kingdom of God is associated with a new conception of the infinite loving-kindness of the heavenly Father) but also of the best parts of the Old Testament. Therefore "The God of Apocalypse can hardly be recognised as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, nor has the fierce Messiah, whose warriors rule in blood up to their horses' bridles, many traits that could recall Him of whom the primitive kerygma proclaimed that He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, because God was with Him".<sup>38</sup> Bultmann also maintained a similar viewpoint. The christianity of Revelation is a "weakly christianized Judaism" and "the peculiar 'between-ness' of Christian existence has not been grasped".<sup>39</sup>

D.H. Lawrence<sup>40</sup> called this book "the Judas of the New Testament" and his strong criticisms have been outlined in Sweet<sup>41</sup> along with the author's own able reply. Lawrence maintained that while authentic christianity holds that though salvation is to be consummated hereafter, it is already present and tangible now ( II Cor.5v17, Co.3v1), Revelation seems intoxicated with the future - reigning in glory hereafter to compensate the frustrated desire to reign now. Sweet however is convinced that the book was written rather for christians who were intoxicated with the present. The victorious Christ is present now among the churches (2v1), and christians already share in his victory as "heaven-dwellers" (12v10-12), although they may lose their crowns (3v11). Again, for Lawrence there is a vindictive

harping in ch.6-20 on the torture and destruction of enemies (6v10, 14v11,20; 18v20; 19v17-21). But Sweet explains that this vindictiveness is directed against abstractions - Babylon, the beasts, the dragon, and the language reflects the conventional idiom of apocalyptic. One must remember that tyrannical rulers, torture and execution were part of daily life and John's "excesses" might be excused as the product of the author's personal situation and psychology.<sup>42</sup> Finally Lawrence claimed that the titles of God and of Christ in Revelation are always titles of power never of love. He maintains that there are two kinds of christianity in the New Testament, (a) the christianity of tenderness focused on Jesus and the command to love one another, and the other focused on the Apocalypse, i.e. the undying will to power in man. The devil has slipped into the New Testament at the last moment in apocalyptic disguises; "just as inevitably as Jesus had to have Judas Iscariot among His disciples, so did there have to be a Revelation in the New Testament."<sup>43</sup> Sweet however believes Lawrence has lost sight of the master-image of the slain Lamb, signifying the power of redemptive love, and that the structure of the book makes the severity of ch.6-20 subordinate to the pictures of Creation and Redemption in ch.4 and 5 and of healing and fulfilment in ch.21v1-22v5.

unique approach to the question of the christian character of Revelation is found in J. Massyngberde Ford's commentary.<sup>44</sup> She maintains that Revelation is not primarily a christian book; it does not fit into the christian apocalyptic genre, and has simply received christian additions. In support of her viewpoint she finds a difference between the Apocalypse and the New Testament apocalypses in I and II Thess., the Gospels and Jude and II Peter, in that Revelation is the only one in which Jesus is not the central figure.<sup>45</sup> Again the post New Testament christian apocalypses like the Didache, Shepherd of Hermas, Ass. of Isaiah, Ap. of Peter and Chr.Sib., all feature overt and indirect quotations from the New Testament and references to events in the life of Christ recorded there. Revelation ch.4-22 on the other hand in its Christology, Pneumatology and Ecclesiology shows little evidence of being a truly christian work.

Ford has revived the compilation theories of Revelation proposed by earlier scholars.<sup>46</sup> She maintains that the authorship of ch.4-11 originated in a trance-like revelation to John the Baptist recorded by a disciple before Jesus commenced His public ministry. Ch. 12-22 was written by a disciple of John in the mid sixties who may or may not have been converted to Christianity. Ch.1-3, 22v16a, 20b,21 were added later by a Jewish Christian disciple who still retained the fiery, somewhat pessimistic outlook of his former master John. Therefore Massyngberde Ford places Revelation earlier than the gospels and most of the New Testament. It is "a prophetic link between the Old and New Covenants, and prepares the way for the gospel".<sup>47</sup>

Not much time or space needs to be devoted to these proposals, as they have not found much support among New Testament scholars. One cannot always dismiss clearly Christian statements and references to Jesus in the main body of the book as interpolations (14v12, 17v6, 19v10, 21v14, 21v1 14v6, 13v8). Again, the identification of the scarlet woman, marked with the name Babylon, with Jerusalem and not with Rome seems very improbable. If one asks how Jerusalem is a maritime power, established upon many waters, with dominion over the kings of the earth reference is made to "sailors of the sea of Galilee and men employed in the brisk trade involving the salt industry at Qumran in the Dead Sea area".<sup>48</sup> The Lamb in ch.5 who redeems by His blood clearly is to be identified with the Lord Jesus Christ and His sacrificial death.

One popular method of attempting to defend the Christian nature of the book of the Revelation is to appeal to the value of its "essential truths" or its "abiding message" for today. For example Hunter in the 1958 ed. of his introduction to the New Testament<sup>49</sup> suggests that John is involved in a particular historical situation and is sure that God is going to intervene catastrophically very soon with the result that Rome's end and the world's end will come. For Hunter his prognostications were not fulfilled as he expected. Rome did not fall as he said...Yet if the seer's lurid vision of the outpouring of God's wrath on Rome were not literally fulfilled, we may surely say that his promises of divine

succour for the stricken church were realized. In the essential truths which he proclaimed through his apocalyptic imagery the seer was right - i.e. all history is divinely controlled; the world is a scene of great conflict between good and evil, and in the end of the day God will finally cope with evil and make an end of it. Heaven is the most real place of all. This "modern understanding" of Revelation according to Hunter makes us value it higher than the reformers did.<sup>50</sup>

Not all New Testament scholars are content just to defend Revelation as christian by affirming simply its "essential truths". Fiorenza<sup>51</sup> attempted to uphold its genuinely christian character by an examination of the dispute of the author with Nicolaitan opponents, interpreted as christian gnostic enthusiasts, strikingly similar to the opponents of Paul in I Corinthians.<sup>52</sup> According to Fiorenza, John polemicizes against them not only in the "letters" but also in the entire book and is more in opposition to them than the Roman state and cult. She discusses whether the author employs an authentic christian theology or whether his christian faith is only superficial because he is so completely immersed in Jewish apocalypticism. Fiorenza is convinced that just as Paul fought his battle against Corinthian enthusiasts under the banner of apocalyptic (as Kasemann maintained) so John has taken the same approach.<sup>53</sup> Both make little reference to the earthly Jesus but centre their theologies in the resurrected Lord of the world. Also as Paul modified his cosmological theology by stressing the importance of the death of Christ, so John emphasises that Christ's Lordship over the world as "King of Kings" is rooted in His violent death (Rev. 5v3-14). Therefore Fiorenza claims that rather than just preserving remnants of Jewish christian theology, the author of Revelation, like Paul, chooses it in his struggle against the Nicholaitanes. Paul counters a realized eschatology by insisting that the christians have not yet achieved their resurrection because the last enemy, death, is still to be overcome. John argues that christians are already appointed to kingship and priesthood but are not yet taking part in the heavenly liturgy until the New Heaven and the New Earth. Thus the apocalyptic question as to

whom lordship of the world belongs underlies both works, and John's theology in Revelation "proves itself to be a christian theology in its own right and comparable to Paul's theological accomplishment".<sup>54</sup>We may not accept Fiorenza's view for a polemic against christian gnostics in the whole of Revelation rather than Rome but this does not neuter-alize her defence of John's christian theology.

A more thorough and telling discussion of the true christian nature of the Book of Revelation is to be found in a recent article by Beasley-Murray<sup>55</sup> briefly mentioned earlier. He examines the supposed sub-christian nature of its Christology, its eschatology and its doctrine of God, said to obscure the apostolic gospel, which lies at the heart of the New Testament. In considering its eschatology he compares the portrait of the Messiah as a lamb in the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs with that in Revelation ch.5. In the Testament of Joseph ch.19 we have in fact two Messiahs, one from Aaron and another from Judah, a lamb and a lion. The Lamb arises to destroy the mighty nations and bring deliverance to Israel by way of orthodox conquest in battle. It has nothing to do with sacrifice but is the young champion of the flock of God. In Revelation 5 the two figures of the lamb and the lion are fused together and unlike the Lamb in Test. of Joseph John's Lamb "stands as it had been slain", i.e. it has been slaughtered but lives again. Since exodus typology is common in the Book of the Revelation it seems clear that John wants his readers to recognise here also God's Passover Lamb (5v9 the Lamb ransomed men to God). The Warrior Lamb has thus conquered by accepting the role of Passover Lamb and so made possible a second exodus. For Beasley-Murray this transformation of the orthodox viewpoint of apocalyptic cannot be exaggerated. "It is more than the change of an apocalyptic figure into a christian symbol for the Saviour. The very nature of eschatology and salvation has been transformed in this change of concept of the Messiah"<sup>56</sup> The eschatology of Revelation is proclaiming that the long awaited deliverance that initiates the new age has already been achieved.

For Beasley-Murray also the Christology of Revelation is "very lofty"<sup>57</sup> worship is offered to the Lamb such as belongs to God alone. He is Alpha and Omega (22v13), mediator of creation (3v14) as of redemption (ch.5) and of the final kingdom (19v11ff), which is the kingdom of the Lord and of His Christ (11v15). Again, the doctrine of God in the Revelation should not be viewed by itself but rather in the light of the Christology, soteriology and eschatology presented in the book. The God of creation (ch.4) is also the God of redemption (ch.5). It is God in Christ who delivers mankind and God in Christ who judges mankind. Revelation's presentation of the judgment of God has often been misunderstood. The three series of messianic judgments (seals, trumpets, bowls) present from three different aspects a single short period of judgment in history. Many have not grasped that this brief period is seen as a repetition of Israel's experience in Egypt. Antichrist is another Pharaoh who resists God and brings judgment on himself and those associated with him, like the plagues of Egypt. But, as in Exodus, the crucial event is not the plagues, but the redemption which brings deliverance. With these arguments Beasley-Murray has presented a strong case for seeing the true christian nature of Revelation. Its purpose will not only have been the encouragement of the saints in their dark hour, but the bringing of men to their senses (9v20f) and to belief in the gospel (14v6) that they might share in the blessings of Christ's redemption (ch.5) and future glory (ch.21-22).

#### The Modification of Apocalyptic in Revelation

The Christ-event has meant modification for the apocalyptic world-view even in this most apocalyptic of books in the New Testament. Kummel<sup>58</sup> examines the Apocalypse of John as an apocalyptic and prophetic book and in a masterly way outlines that modification. As others have, he finds many links in Revelation with the literary genre of Jewish apocalyptic, but stresses that "at more than one point the seer of the Apocalypse frees himself in a characteristic way from the schema of apocalyptic literature and sketches a historical picture of quite a different sort from Jewish apocalyptic".<sup>59</sup> Some notable differences are the fact that

Revelation is not a pseudonymous book, for John writes under his own name; he presents what he has seen, not secret wisdom allegedly from primitive times; the book is intended for a large circle and its literary framework, a preface (1v4ff) and conclusion (22v21) is reminiscent of the literary form of much early Christian literature. But it is in its view of history that the Apocalypse contrasts even more sharply from the Jewish type. "What is new here in Revelation is a total recasting of the apocalyptic view of history out of the Jewish into the Christian mould. The apocalyptic view of history has received a new substructure through the historical appearance of Jesus. On this the entire weight of the structure rests. In distinction from Jewish apocalyptic there is lacking here any look back into the past and any forward view out of that fictional past into the present. For John, the point of departure for his eschatological hope is rather the belief in the saving of God in Jesus, and in his redemptive work which signifies victory."<sup>60</sup> In the light of this we must acknowledge that while apocalyptic has been strongly influential in this book it has experienced significant modification because of Christ's appearance and achievement at the cross. The apocalyptists looked forward to the end of the age for deliverance and blessing; John stresses that that deliverance has already been achieved in Christ. Thus here as in the Synoptics, and as in Paul, the coming of Christ has transformed the apocalyptic world-view. Yet it needs to be stressed that the apocalyptic hope has not been completely discarded. Beasley-Murray may stress<sup>61</sup> that Rev.5 reveals that Christ has commenced His rule, but he also acknowledges "the rest of creation has yet to render the acknowledgement due to the Lamb".<sup>62</sup> Again while lying at the heart of John's doctrine of redemption is the conviction that the kingdom promised through the prophets came among men (Beasley-Murray's interpretation of the author's millennial teaching),<sup>63</sup> yet he admits that that kingdom awaits a glorious revelation in history at the intervention of Christ at His parousia and will only reach its consummation in the transcendent order of the new creation. Also concerning the concept of the New Jerusalem, common in Jewish apocalyptic<sup>64</sup>

there may be "hints in Revelation 20-22, above all in 20.9 that the city which descends from heaven to earth is manifest in the kingdom of Christ" /65 but it still continues into the new creation.

Finally we may add that the Lamb who offers himself in sacrifice and brings deliverance (5.6,12;12.11;13.6) is still the Lamb who pours out his wrath (ch.6; 14.10), who overcomes those who make war with him (17.14), an emphasis which echoes the use of this concept in Jewish apocalyptic. /66 Therefore in conclusion we can say that "in the finest christian specimen of apocalyptic literature /67 apocalyptic has been modified, even transformed, by the Christ-event, but the apocalyptic hope has not been cast aside. In fact, the past triumph of the Lamb in history and his presence in glory is the assurance of the full and final fulfilment of that hope.

#### Notes

1. A.M. Hunter, Introducing the NT, (SCM 1972), 88
2. eg cf Rom.16.25; 1 Cor 14.26; Gal 1.12;2.2; Eph 1.17;3 .3
3. Barker, "Slippery Words", Exp.T. traces the use of the term in this specialized sense to the German scholar K.I. Nitzsch who used it in the early part of the last century to describe books which resembled the biblical apocalypse.
4. J. Kallas, "The Apocalypse - and Apocalyptic Book?" JBL , 86,1967, 69-80
5. B.W. Jones, "More about the Apocalypse as Apocalyptic", JBL,88 1968. 325-327
6. D. HILL, "Prophecy and Prophets in Revelation" NTS 18, 401-418
7. ibid, 402f
8. ibid., 403
9. J. Conblin, Le Christ dans l'Apocalypse,Paris 1965, 5f, 85 in Hill, op.cit, 403f
10. G. von Rad, Theology of the OT,II, ET, London 1965, 303ff
11. Hill, op.cit, 406ff
12. L. Morris.op.cit, 91ff
13. ibid, 95
14. J.J. Collins, "Pseudonymity, Historical Reviews and the Genre of the Revelation of John, CBO 1977, Vol 39

15. Collins mentions B.W. Jones, op.cit., P. Vielhauer. "Apocalyptic in Early Christianity" in E. Hennecke, NT Apocrypha. ed. W. Schneemelcher; Philadelphia 1965, II 608-42
16. Collins finds support in R.H. Charles, APOT 2 IX
17. Collins, op.cit., 342
18. Such prophecies are missing in eg The Similitudes of Enoch 1-36; cf also 2 Enoch
19. See Daniel 12.4; also 4 Ezra 14. The visionary writes 94 books of which 24 the canonical books, were to be made public but 70 must be kept to deliver them to the wise among the people
20. op.cit., 342ff Collins believes the role of Jesus Christ in Revelation constitutes a major difference between this book and other apocalypses but still sees Christ as conforming to the traditional Jewish concept of heavenly warrior or judge, and its message is not altogether the kind the earthly Jesus envisaged in his own teaching.
21. E.S. Fiorenza, "The Composition and Structure of the Book of the Revelation", CBO 1977, Vol 39, 344-366
22. A.W. Farrer, A Rebirth of Images, Boston 1949, finds in Revelation an elaborate pattern based on the week of creation, overlaid with the four important feasts of the Jewish liturgical year (Passover, New Year, Tabernacles and Dedication) suitably arranged.
23. M.H. Shepherd, The Paschal Liturgy and the Apocalypse, Richmond 1960, 83
24. op.cit., 353
25. E. Stauffer, Christus und die Cäsaren, 6th Ed., Hamburg Wittig 1964 in Fiorenza, op.cit. 353
26. P. Palmer, The Drama of the Apocalypse. NYork 1903; J.W. Bowman, "The Revelation to John. Its Dramatic Structure & Message", Int 9, 1955, 436ff
27. P. Carrington, "Astral Mythology in the Revelation", ATR 13, 1941, 289-305
28. op.cit., 356. Fiorenza quotes in support P.D. Hanson, Dawn, 402-403
29. op.cit. 357
31. The technique of intercalation involves the narration of two formal units or episodes (A and A1) and then intercalating another form or scene ie B between them, thus requiring the reader to see the combined text as a whole. Revelation often displays a double intercalation (cf Fiorenza, ibid, 361ff)
32. Fiorenza points out that one can see here the affinity of the structure of Revelation to that of the Greek drama for, according to the compositional rules of the tragedy, the climax falls near the centre of the action and the denouement comes near the end.
33. G.R. Beasley-Murray, Revelation 34 ibid

35. For an outline of these difficulties see eg W.G. Kümmel, Introduction to NT, S.C.M., 1963, 469ff
36. See Beasley-Murray, "How Christian is the Book of Revelation?" in L.Morris Festschrift, Reconciliation and Hope, IVPress ,275
37. C.H. Dodd, Apostolic Preaching and its Development,
38. ibid., 40ff      39. R. Bultmann, Theology of NT, II London 1955, 175
40. D.H. Lawrence, op.cit.,
41. J. Sweet, Revelation, London 1979, 48ff
42. Sweet makes reference to C.G. Jung, Answer to Job, (ET Routledge and Kegan Paul) 1954; Reissued, Hodder & Stoughton 1965, 121ff
43. op.cit., 14
44. J. Massyngberde Ford, Revelation, NYork 1975
45. For Massyngberde-Ford the Lamb in ch.5 is simply the divine-human Messiah of Jewish apocalypticism and there is no reference here to Jesus or his death
46. Cf Fiorenza, Composition for examples      47. op.cit.
48. op.cit.      49. Hunter, op.cit      50. ibid, 103ff
51. Fiorenza, "Apocalyptic & Gnosis in the Book of Revelation & Paul", JBL,92, 1973, 565-81
52. ibid., 571ff      53. ibid, 573ff      54. ibid, 581
55. Beasley-Murray, "How Christian etc      56. ibid 279
57. ibid., 282
58. Kümmel, op.cit.458ff
59. ibid, 459      60. ibid 461-2
61. op.cit., 279ff      62. ibid 280
63. ibid.,280f
64. eg Text of Daniel 5.12; II baruch 32:2-4; II Esdras 7.26; 10.49
65. Beasley-Murray, op.cit., 281
66. eg 1 Enoch 89. 45,48
67. See p.1

The New Jerusalem Bible and Modern Translations

E.A. Russell

An oft-quoted Italian proverb has it: traduttori traditori, "translators are traitors." The proverb to be sure has lost any indictment that it was intended to have. Today it only underlines the problems and dangers that face the would-be translator. Think of the numerous translations of the Bible into English done by individual or major groups of scholars over the past fifty years or so: The RSV (1952), NEB (1961), "Good News for Modern Man" (1966) and the German translation made from it "Gute Nachricht für sie" (1969), La Bible de Jérusalem (1973; revised 1984), the Jerusalem Bible (1966) and the New Jerusalem Bible (1985); Traduction Oecuménique de la Bible (1975), J.B. Phillips (1958) and Wm Barclay (1968). That revisions are taking place of recognized translations only underlines the elusive nature of the ancient texts as well as the progress in understanding.

This widespread activity of translators gives rise from time to time to the query as to whether there will ever be a time when the Church as a whole will agree on one single translation for use in worship and in religious education. (The RSV has come near to being this but such a position is constantly being challenged). The King James Version still continues to dominate in Irish Presbyterian congregations but, again, this too is being challenged by the New International Version (NIV). In a limited number of congregations, pulpit and pew bibles have been installed (RSV;NEB;TEV or GNMM). The New Jerusalem Bible (NJB) with the imprimatur of Cardinal Basil Hume (as also the JB) has met with wide acceptance in liturgical usage in Roman Catholic circles and has generally commended itself to the Church at large.

The NJB revision, as with other revisions, takes notice of the progress in scholarship since the JB was published eg linguistic, archaeological or theological (Introd. p.v). One of the charges levelled against the JB that it was too dependent on the original French translation. The NJB translates generally direct from the original Hebrew or Greek. Stress (as in the JB) is on the need to provide a study Bible, hence the useful updated introductions, subjected headings and excellent footnotes,

usually models of precision, and translated straight from the original French.

It will not be possible of course to cover all the interesting aspects of the NJB translation. What we propose to do is to make a selection and set them in comparison from time to time with other recent translations.

We begin with the problem of sexist language.

The NJB mentions the "considerable efforts.....made...to soften or avoid the inbuilt preference of the English language.....for the masculine" (Introd., p.v.) The NJB is not the first or only translation to do this. The Quaker and Classicist, Mr Norman Marrow /1 makes a determined effort to get rid of chauvinistic language in his translation, "The Four Gospels". He is well aware of the problems of getting a translation that can communicate in modern English without being too crippled by its social, cultural and religious context. The orthodox Jewish people, for example, were strict in their view of the inferior position of women. Such a tradition may lie behind the story of the creation of woman from the rib of a man.

A familiar King James translation is "I will make you fishers of men" (Mk 1.17). Both Marrow and the NJB change "men" into "people". The Greek word anthropoi has a generic sense, hence "people" and equally "human beings". Compare the translation "In the same way your light must shine before people" (Mt. 5.16 TEV). Sometimes the attempt to avoid sexist language can make for a turgid or heavy style. We may illustrate this from Mt.5.22-23 where the word adelphos occurs on four occasions. Mr Marrow's translation runs:

All who harbour violent feelings against their fellow humanbeings will come up for judgment, anyone who calls a fellow human-being an idle fool will come before the judgment seat, and any who calls a fellow-being a reprobate will be heading for Gehenna and its fires. So if you're bringing your offering to the altar and remember, when you get there, that a fellow human-being bears you a grudge.....

Such a laborious effort has not been followed by the NJB or others. Adelphoi is used frequently in the NT epistles. In Paul's epistle to the Romans, the translations "brothers" and "friends" vie with each other (cf 1.13;7.1;

B.12;10.1;12.1;15.14; 16.17). While there is evidence in classical writings that adelphoi can be used to include "sisters", /2 the evidence hardly supports that Jesus used adelphoi in this way. Unless we are to insist that adelphoi be used for "fellow-Christians", then we have to admit that the Church reflects the male-orientated expressions of Judaism.

The NJB, however, is prepared to take the risk of a translation that is non-sexist even if in this it does not follow La Bible de Jérusalem and may embark on a less felicitous style. Take, for example, a passage in the Book of Wisdom-(7.22f):

JB

For within her is a spirit intelligent, holy, unique, manifold, subtle, active, incisive, unsullied, lucid, invulnerable, sharp, irresistible, beneficent, loving to man

LBJ

En elle, est, en effet, un esprit intelligent, saint, unique, multiple, subtil, mobile, pénétrant, sans souillure, clair, impassible, ami du bien, prompt, irresistible, bienfaisant, ami des hommes

NJB

For within her is a spirit, intelligent, holy, unique, manifold, subtle, mobile; incisive, unsullied, lucid, invulnerable, benevolent, shrewd, irresistible, beneficent, friendly to human beings

The Greek behind the translations underlined is philanthropos with the literal meaning "loving mankind" (Cf CSV "humane") or "benevolent". If we take anthropos as above in the generic sense ie as "mankind", there is scarcely any problem here, it would appear. We may note how lengthy is the paraphrase "friendly to human beings".

Other familiar masculine expressions are altered eg tasteless salt, trodden underfoot of men, becomes "under people's feet" (NJB) or, simply, "trodden underfoot" (NEB) or "par les gens" (LBJ) The KJV "Let your light so shine before men" (Mt.5.16) becomes "Your light must shine in people's sight" (NJB) or "among your fellows" (NEB) or "before all mankind" (Marrow)

We turn now to look at what proves to be a difficult word to translate in a modern setting, the Greek word idou,

which itself is the LXX translation of the Hebrew word **Behold** (= "Behold") The difficulty is well-known.

Some scholars have an original approach in their attempt to deal with the problem. Ronald Knox has given us some notable examples:

RSV

Behold I have given you every plant (Gen 1.29)

Behold an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream (Mt 1.20)

Behold, wise men came from the East (Mt 2.1)

Lo, the star which they had seen in the East (Mt 2.9)

But Norman Marrow is equally imaginative eg "Who should appear to him in a dream but a messenger of the Lord" (Mt 20); "Who should arrive in Jerusalem from somewhere in the East" (Mt 2.1); "And, would you believe it, the star which they had seen in the East" (Mt 2.9) (Cf also Mt 2.13,19)

La Bible de Jérusalem sticks regularly to the original text, translating voilà (or voici) que, though sometimes it will omit the **Behold** (cf Gen 2.29; 3.22; 9.9)

Knox, in his translation, suggests the suddenness of what took place eg "hardly had the thought come"; or "All at once the star". Marrow, on the other hand, emphasizes the incredibility of what had happened and the element of surprise eg "who should appear", who should arrive" and "would you believe it?) [For the variety of uses of "idou" (hineh), it is worth looking at Arndt & Gingrich, Greek-English Lexicon of the NT, Cambridge, 1957<sup>4</sup> ]

The NJB takes a quite unusual, if not unique, approach to idou. In the nativity chapters of Matthew, we find the word "suddenly" is used for idou "Suddenly the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream" (ie Joseph) (1.20) "Suddenly some wise men came to Jerusalem from the East" (Mt 2.2). Thus idou gives life and interest to the narrative . It introduces something new, a supernatural event, and stresses it is out of the ordinary run of things. /3

Knox

Here are all the herbs God told him

But hardly had the thought come to his mind when the angel of the Lord appeared

And thereupon certain wise men came out of the East

All at once the star which they had seen in the East

The NJB translation "suddenly" does not represent the LBJ. There in Mt 1 and 2 it is consistently voici que. Nor is it always the translation of idou. In Lk 1.48 the RSV translation is familiar: "Behold, henceforth all generations shall called me blessed". Obviously the translation "suddenly" is impossible. Thus NJB has "Yes, from now onwards." A similar problem arises in 1.31: "Behold, you will conceive in your womb", where NJB has "Look! you are to conceive in the womb. We need hardly explore the usage in the epistles, but one fine translation may be mentioned. In 2 Cor.6.9 the RSV has "dying and behold we live". The LJB render the paradox: "dying, yet here we are, alive."

An interesting feature of Mark's Gospel is the frequency with which he uses the adverb euthus, "immediately" something which has proved difficult for many translators. If it does impart an urgency to the style, for example, how are we to explain this urgency?

The NEB handles the problem skilfully. We may place its renderings (or omissions) alongside those of the RSV, the LJB and the NJB.

NEB	RSV	LJB	NJB	MK
the moment when	immediately	aussitot	at once	1.10
ereupon	"	"	"	1.12
once	"	"	"	1.18
mits)	"	"	"	1.20
there was		"	"	1.23
man	"	"	"	1.28
news spread		"	"	
apidly	"	"	"	
mediately	at once	"	"	1.42

It must be confessed that there is a great improvement in style achieved by the NEB and the repetitiveness and even "s redundancy (something generally characteristic of Mk) eased. But if Mk has a "rough homespun" Greek, are we being true to him to look for polish and not plainness or ordinariness or colloquialism in his speech. For the student without Greek, the adherence to a fixed translation for the same Greek word can be an advantage but only, it would seem to me, if like the RV it is adhered to consistently. H.F.D. Sparks, in his pamphlet, On Translations of the Bible, argues that the bible student should stick to the RV text, not that of the RSV or the NEB. (He does not discuss the NJB) /4 Perhaps

the only satisfactory solution is to be found in a knowledge of the original Greek, on the basis of which the variations in the translations would be understood and a much greater appreciation of the expertise of the translators. /5

Dom Henry Wansbrough, the General Editor of the NJB, /6 stresses the nature of the NJB as a study Bible. Thus, as we have already seen, accuracy of translation has been a main consideration and the avoidance of paraphrase. Key theological concepts have where possible been rendered by the same English word. One striking example of this is worth discussing. This is the Greek word dikaiosunē in Mt usually rendered "righteousness". The NJB makes it "uprightness". It is perhaps hardly necessary to point out that dikaios and dikaiosunē are terms that often occur in Mt's special source and help the identification of redactional elements in the Gospel. The NEB recognizes that, in different contexts, the terms can have a different shade of meaning eg Joseph is described as "a man of principle" (dikaios: 1.19); God sends rain on the "honest" (5.45); Jesus invited sinners not the virtuous (9.13). The JB does not avoid variety and a comparison of the JB with the NEB suggests that the former is influenced on a number of occasions by the NEB.

JB	NEB
thirst for what is right in the cause of right	to see right prevail (5.6) for the cause of right (5.10)
a man of honour	a man of principle (1.19)
honest	honest (5.45)
virtuous	virtuous (9.13)
fair	fair (20.4)
innocent	innocent (27.4)

The translation of the LBJ is consistently juste, justice. On the only three occasions when it deviates from this we have equitable (20.4), innocent (23.35; 27.4). It is interesting that the NJB differs from "uprightness" at precisely the same three points: fair (20.4), holy (23.35) and innocent (27.4). The translation "upright" or "uprightness" is not a new translation. As far back as 1923 Edgar Goodspeed used it in his translation of Matthew /7 with few variations. Similarly, the description of Joseph as "a man of principle" occurred in the Penguin

translation of E.V. Rieu. /8

What impression in a modern setting does the word "upright" makes on us? Are we wrong in thinking of it as associated with a milieu of pride, of moral achievement, striven for and obtained? Does it in fact fit in easily with the terminology of today? It does to be sure have an appropriate element of "right" in it with a phrase like "thirst for what is right" or, with a nuance of vindication in it, be persecuted"for the cause of right". (5.10). If however we accept the TEV thought of "conforming to what God requires" and keep in mind a relationship with God through whose grace such an uprightness is achieved it becomes meaningful. The NJB however does with this translation appear to be exceptional among the translations of more recent times.

When the JB first appeared, one striking variation in translation related to John 1.13 which runs as follows:

JB

he gave power to become children  
of God  
to all who believe in the name of  
him  
who was born not out of human stock  
or of the urge of the flesh  
or will of man  
but of God himself.

LBJ

a ceux qui croient en son nom  
lui qui ne fut engendré ni du sang  
ni d'un vouloir de chair  
ni d'un vouloir d'homme

The JB note at this point indicates that here there is an allusion to the eternal generation of Jesus and his virginal birth. The LBJ has to admit that such a reading is not generally accepted. /9 It is not found in Greek manuscripts but in Latin in particular though some scholars including Blass, Burney, Boismard and F.M. Braun are attracted to it. It is, however, generally agreed, on the basis of textual evidence, the reading must be rejected. Dogmatic tendencies to shape the text to the singular to support the virgin birth would be strong. The NJB, in spite of the LBJ, does not accept the singular reading.

Some will be surprised to note that the longer ending of Mk (16.9-20) is not separated from the text as non-

Marcan. This is true equally of the pericope adulterae (John 7.53-8.11). The basic reason for such an action is that both passages are part of the "canonically accepted body of inspired scripture" and this in spite of the textual evidence or the differences in style, eg the style of the pericope adulterae is recognized as Lucan and written possibly by him. Again, it is also agreed that Mk probably intended to end at 16.8 but "the first Christian generation felt the ending was incomplete....and added the longer ending."

While the NJB (and JB) has the biblical student in mind, there is no mention, as in the NEB, of aiming at the man in the street. The NEB was courageous and adventurous in reaching for the unchurched, and, although sensitive to the need for a good style, left itself open to charges of colloquialism and infelicity. For the sake of comparison, we set out the NEB, RSV and NJB side by side:

NEB	RSV	NJB
"Let us toss for it", said the soldiers (Jn 19.24)	"cast lots for it" (So AV)	"Let us throw dice to decide who is to have it"
"I sponged on no one" (2 Cor.11.9)	"I did not burden anyone"	"I was no burden to anyone"
"They left me in the lurch" (2 Tim.4.16)	"All deserted me" (All...forsook me"AV)	"Everyone of them deserted me"
"This is more than we can stomach" (Jn 6.40=	"who can listen to it?"	"How could anyone accept it?"
"I may dole out all I possess" (1 Cor. 13.3)	"If I give away all I have"	"give away to the poor all I possess"
"They got wind of it" (Acts 14.6	"They learned of it"	"They came to hear of this"

Has the NEB paid too heavy a price for vivid arresting metaphor? All the translations can hardly be misunderstood but the less adventurous expression of the RSV and NJB are more stylistic. But is it really possible to produce a really up-to-date translation of an ancient book? It has been given expression thus:

In the modern world the fundamental ideas of the NT are as antiquated, alien, and 'irrelevant', as is the language of the AV. Yet these are the ideas into which the Church is commissioned to baptize the world in every age. And there

are no adequate grounds for thinking that the mere modernization of the language in which they are expressed will make them either more up-to-date essentially or more acceptable universally." /10

One of the most familiar texts in Genesis is chapter three, verse 15, the so-called proto-evangelium.

I shall put enmity between you and the woman,  
and between your offspring and hers;  
It will bruise your head  
and you will strike its heel (NJB)

The RSV translation of Gen 3.15 has been criticized on the grounds that it imported into the text a dogmatic point of view that was not originally there. /11 Its translation runs:

I will put enmity between you and the woman  
and between your seed and her seed;  
he shall bruise your head  
but you shall bruise his heel.

Professor Hans Peter Rüger writes: "The RSV...not only replaces 'descendants', the normal equivalent of the Hebrew *Ȳb* by 'seed', but also violates the rules of English grammar according to which the personal pronoun corresponding to 'seed', is 'it' not 'he'". /12 He dismisses any suggestion of a proto-evangelium in the Hebrew on the basis 1. that 'seed' is evidently a collective noun, which as such cannot have any direct or indirect reference to Christ and/or Mary; and 2. that Gen. 3.15 forms part of a curse, and therefore cannot be a promise or a prophecy by implication. Thus in Rüger's literal translation, we have the verbs interpreted as iterative imperfects, "I put", "it bruises...you bruise" and the enmity spoken of here as permanent.

Professor Rüger commends the NJB for its clarifying note on the verse (so also LBJ) /13. The note is as follows:

The Greek version has a masculine pronoun ("he" not "it" will bruise...), thus ascribing the victory not to the woman's descendants in general but to one of her sons in particular, and thus providing the basis for the messianic interpretation given by many of the Fathers. The Latin version has a feminine pronoun ("she" will bruise...) and since, in the messianic interpretation of our text, the Messiah and his mother appear together, the pronoun has been taken to refer to Mary.

It has perhaps been noticed that the NJB feels free to take an independent line on a number of occasions from the LBJ eg idou as "suddenly" or on non-sexist language. One of the crucial verses in Pauline writings is Romans 3.25::

## LBJ

Dieu l'a exposé, instrument  
de propitiation par son  
propre sang, moyennant la  
foi

## NJB

God appointed him as a  
sacrifice for reconciliation  
through faith by the shedding  
of his blood

The Greek term, proetheto can mean either "set forth" and in a context where the thought of manifestation is present is preferred by a number of scholars, including the LBJ. On the other hand, it can mean "appointed" with the thought of God's purpose behind. Again, the Greek nominal adjective hilastérion strictly means "mercy-seat" and is interpreted either as "propitiation" or "expiation". The former has the thought of appeasement of God who manifests his anger as a holy God against sin. "Expiation" can have the meaning of wiping away of offence without necessarily stressing God as angry. /17 The form of expression of the NJB recalls the Day of Atonement when the wrath of God was taken away and reconciliation achieved through the sacrificial blood sprinkled on the altar. The LBJ prefers to hold on to the more traditional or "primitive" expression.

We have another example in Ephesians 1.7:

## LBJ

En lui nous trouvons la  
rédeption par son sang,  
la remission des fautes

## NJB

In whom through his blood  
we gain our freedom, the  
forgiveness of our sins

Here again the LBJ uses the traditional term while the NJB uses "freedom", crystallizing the significance of apolutrōsis.

Recent NT discussion is reflected in the NJB's translation of peirazomai. It prefers "test", not "tempt," eg Jesus is led into the wilderness to be "put to the test" by the devil where the LBJ prefers "tenté" (Mk 4.1); the "tester" comes to him; Jesus replies: "Do not put the Lord your God to the test" (Mt 4.3,7;cf Jas 1.13-15)

It is notable that the French and British scholars reject the view that at creation, the "Spirit of God"

moved over the waters. The NJB translates "with a divine wind sweeping over the waters". In a note on בָּרָא (bara, create) the LBJ dismisses the interpretation of creatio ex nihilo as a metaphysical notion that did not appear before 2 Maccabees 7.28, "God made them out of what did not exist."

Among the many excellent features of the NJB, one stands out above all others, and that is the quality of the appended notes, eg that on "Son of God" (Mt 4.3) and that on sovereignty (Mt 4.17) et alii. The maps to help the student at the back of the NJB are a great advance on those in the LBJ and the JB as any comparison will indicate. The publishers, Darton Longman & Todd Ltd, are to be warmly congratulated on a superb volume that will give pleasure to all who are privileged to handle it and the General Editor, Dom Henry Wansbrough of Ampleforth Abbey, on what, I am sure, has been a real labour of love.

On the back cover of the book is a small inscription:

#### NOTES

1. Norman Marrow, The Four Gospels, Luton 1977
2. Cf Arndt & Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the NT, Cambridge University Press 1967: Art: adelphos
3. Ibid. on idou
4. Ethel Wood Lecture, London 1973
5. It is remarkable how this point is stressed in D.E. Nineham, (Ed) The New English Bible, London 1965, pp34,58,61
6. NJB, p.v
7. Edgar Goodspeed, The New Testament. An American Translation, University of Chicago 1923
8. E.V. Rieu. The Four Gospels, Penguin Press Ltd 1953
9. See ad loc.
10. See Nineham, op.cit for the Times Literary Supp. review, 73
11. H.P. Rüger, The Bible Translator, Vol.27, No 1, Jan 1976, 105-110
12. op.cit
13. op.cit

PRESBYTERIAN WORSHIP IN ULSTER PRIOR TO THE  
INTRODUCTION OF THE WESTMINSTER DIRECTORY IN 1647.

W.D. Bailie.

I

Presbyterianism owes its inception in Ulster to the arrival of Scottish planters and colonists towards the end of the first decade of the seventeenth century. These settlers were soon joined by ministers from their native land at the invitation of the new landlords, who held the advowsons of the parish churches in their territories. The number of these ministers was considerably increased from 1621 onwards with the imposition by Parliament of the Five Articles of Perth (1618)<sup>2</sup> upon a reluctant Church of Scotland. Ministers and probationers because of their refusal to comply with what they considered were Anglican practices were forced to seek asylum elsewhere, and for some the place of refuge was among their fellow-Scots in the newly created plantation of Ulster.

The ecclesiastical situation in Ireland was such that the Presbyterian ministers, if not actually welcomed by the bishops of the established Church in Ireland, were at least tolerated,<sup>3</sup> because of a shortage of adequately trained English clergy, and inducted to vacant charges, principally in the dioceses of Down, Connor and Derry. The Scots claim to have been ordained or installed more presbyteriano,<sup>4</sup> although there is still some controversy on this point. But concerning one matter there can be no dispute - the fact that these early Presbyterian ministers refused to countenance the use of the English Book of Common Prayer in their conduct of Public Worship and other Ceremonies of the Church.

The Rev. Robert Blair, who came to Ulster in 1623 at the instigation of Lord Clandeboy, patron of the Kirk at Bangor, and was appointed to the cure there, states "Lord Viscount Clandeboy...informed the Bishop Echlin(Down) how opposite I was to Episcopacy and their Liturgy";<sup>5</sup> and John Livingstone, minister of Killinchy (1630-35) declares that "he had scruple against Episcopacie and ceremonies".<sup>6</sup>

Their objection to, and disregard of, the Book of Common Prayer is testified to by bishop John Bramhall of Derry

(1634-1661). In a letter to archbishop William Laud of Canterbury in 1634, he informs His Grace that all the resident ministers in the dioceses of Down and Connor were "absolute irregulars, the very ebullition of Scotland" and that "it would trouble a man to find twelve common Prayer-books in all their churches and these onely not cast behind the altar, because they have none."<sup>7</sup> The bishop of Down and Connor, Henry Leslie (1635-61) in his polemical work A Treatise of the Authority of the Church, originally delivered as a sermon in Belfast at a Visitation of his diocese on 10 August 1636, to try and bring the "Presbyteriall Dictators" and "new Gospellers", as he calls them, to heel; and published in 1637 together with an Answer to certaine Objections made against the Orders of our Church, especially kneeling at the Communion - two valuable documents for assessing what was the norm of worship among the early Presbyterians in Ulster - gives a much fuller picture of the Presbyterian dislike of the rules and ceremonies of the Prayer-book, and at the same time endeavours to controvert their objections.

The bishop writes of the Presbyterians as follows:

Theydoe not onely oppose the Ceremonies, but the whole Liturgie of the Church, wherein the soule of Gods publicke worship doth consist. Besides their doctrine is not sound; for they have taught that the Order of Bishops is Antichristian, which we know to be Apostolicke: That our Ceremonies are damnable, which wee can prove to bee both lawfull and decent: that our Service-booke is a heap of errors, which we can justifie to be the most absolute Liturgie, that any Church in the world hath: That the sign of the Crosse in Baptisme, and kneeling in the act of receiving the Communion, is plaine idolatry, then (sic) which Hell it selfe could not have devised a more shamelesse calumnie: That the Eucharist being a Supper and a Feast, no gesture should be used at it, but a table gesture, to expresse our coheirship and equality with Christ, which if it smell not strong of Arrianisme, I have lost my sent (sic): That all festival dayes, besides

the Lords day, and all set fasts are Jewish, and contrary to our Christian liberty, which is the condemned heresie of Aerius. They have cried downe the most wholesome orders of the Church, as Popish superstitions, namely confirmation of children, absolution of penitents private baptisme of children in case of necessity, the Communion of the sicke, and almost whatsoever hath any conformity with the Ancient Church".<sup>8</sup>

Up to the autumn of 1631 the Presbyterian ministers were able, in the words of one of their number, to conduct public worship and administer the sacraments "free of any inventions of men".<sup>9</sup> But with the advent of Laudian High Church reform their non-conformity with the Prayer-book was, as already noted, frowned upon by the bishops and the most refractory of the ministers were suspended from office in 1631; and while they were reinstated for brief periods during the years of 1632-34, were finally deposed and excommunicated because of their persistent refusal to accept the Irish Canons, drawn up by Convocation in 1634.<sup>10</sup>

During the periods of their suspension and even after their final deposition, some of these ministers continued to preach and care for the souls of their flocks, convening meetings for worship where possible 11 in churches, but more often in barns and private houses.

After an abortive attempt to reach New England in the ship Eagle Wing in 1636, some of the ministers and people decided to return to their native land of Scotland.<sup>12</sup> In this way they probably escaped being slain in the Irish Rebellion of 1641.<sup>13</sup> Those who remained in Ulster, in the words of Principal Robert Baillie, "Did abstene much from the publick worship; and in privatt, among themselves, their ministers being all banished, did in that place and tyme of persecution, comfort themselves with prayer and reading, and uther exercises of religion, whiles in the night, whiles in the day, as they had occasion".<sup>14</sup> Blair and Livingstone both record in 1637,

when they were celebrating communion at a church in Irvine on the west coast of Scotland, many of their former parishioners from Bangor and Killinchy braved the seas to be present with their wives and elder children.<sup>15</sup> In these ways they kept alight the torch of Presbyterianism in Ulster until a better day dawned with the arrival of the Scottish forces in 1642 to help quell the Irish Rebellion; and the setting up of the first Presbytery at Carrickfergus, by the Scottish chaplains and officer elders in June the same year.<sup>16</sup>

## II

The norm of worship in Scotland from the Reformation there in 1560 to the acceptance by the General Assembly in 1645 of the Westminster Directory for Public Worship was the Book of Common Order(1564) or John Knox's Liturgy as it is popularly called; but there were variations in practice during this period as the ministers were not tied to a literal fulfilment of every rubric contained therein.<sup>17</sup> In view of the latitude allowed to ministers it is too much to expect that the early Presbyterian ministers in Ulster followed the Book of Common Order closely. G.W. Sprott claims that some of those who opposed the Articles of Perth (and the majority of the Ulster Presbyterian ministers were of this school) used the Book of Common Order as a Directory rather than a liturgy.<sup>18</sup> In fact there is no direct reference to the use of the Book of Common Order in any of the contemporary writings of these Ulster Presbyterians; although copies of the book were in the land at time, for bishop Leslie - the chief upholder of Anglican rites in Ulster - refers to the "Psalme booke", which was the usual designation for the Book of Common Order in Scotland in his visitation address of 1636.<sup>19</sup>

It is known that on the second day of the Visitation in Belfast on 11 August 1636 the leader of the Presbyterian ministers - James Hamilton of Ballywalter - in his disputation with the bishop displayed no preference

for the Book of Common Order. When the bishop explained that the third Canon meant that they were not to use any other forms of liturgy than the Book of Common Prayer, Hamilton simply said, "We consent to use no other liturgy".<sup>20</sup> Yet at the same time neither Hamilton nor his companions were prepared to use the Book of Common Prayer.

Notwithstanding their seeming indifference to the Book of Common Order an investigation of the worship of the early Presbyterian party in Ulster, as disclosed from a study of the writings of the Presbyterian ministers and the letters and published works of their opponents bishops Leslie, Bramhall and Echlin, shows that much of the worship and many practices of the Ulster-Scots were in accord with current trends in Scotland, although there is evidence also from other sources of an assimilation of some of the distinctive elements of English Puritan worship. This, however, is not surprising as there was a considerable amount of commingling between the Scots and Presbyterian and English Puritan settlers, especially in the territory of the Clotworthies of South Antrim, where a great monthly Lecture meeting was held from Friday to Monday, and at which there was much public preaching and many private meetings for prayer and edification.<sup>21</sup>

A description of the worship and practices of the Presbyterian party in Ulster may be conveniently dealt with as follows: Public Worship, Sermons and Catechising; Communion; Baptism; Fasts and Days of Humiliation; Marriage; Visitation of the Sick and Burial of the Dead; Holy Days and Festivals; Excommunication and Reception of Penitents and the Pulpit Dress of Ministers.

#### Public Worship, Sermons and Catechising

It was usual for these Presbyterian ministers to hold two services on the Lord's day. One in the fore-noon at which the majority of the members of the congregation was present; a second service which took the same form as the morning service, was held in the afternoon, but

as some people lived a considerable distance from the Church they went home after the first service. In Scotland it was customary to catechise the congregation at some period during the afternoon service; although Alexander Henderson states in 1641 that "this manner of Catechising is not general, but it is more ordinary now to appoint a week-day for catechising".<sup>22</sup> Blair at the beginning of his ministry at Bangor referring to public catechising declares that it was a mockery to examine people without prior instruction; consequently he spent at least one day in the week visiting and instructing the people.<sup>23</sup> In addition to the Sunday services these early Presbyterians often preached as many as four or five times in the course of the week.<sup>24</sup>

The Scottish custom of the time was for the minister to preach what was called an "ordinary". A passage of Scripture or book of Scripture was selected and this formed the basis of the teaching from Sunday to Sunday over a considerable period. Blair records that during his first year in Ulster he broke with this tradition. "In the first year of my ministry I resolved not to pitch upon a book or chapter to go through it but made a choice of such passages as held forth fundamentals (most material and important points of religion)."<sup>25</sup> Later in his ministry Blair, however, seems to have followed the usual Scottish practice at what was his weekly sermon day; for it is stated in Row's Supplement to Blair's Life, that on Tuesday, 20th March 1632, part of his text was Romans xv.23; and on the following Tuesday, his text was Romans xv.30.<sup>26</sup>

In Scotland prior to 1600 the usual preaching days were Wednesday and Friday, but at the instance of King James, the preaching day was changed to a Tuesday from that date. The change was generally acquiesced in;<sup>27</sup> and as Blair had been brought up in this Jacobean tradition he made the Tuesday his regular preaching day in Ulster.<sup>28</sup>

The sermon was the most important part of public worship; the prayers and Scripture reading(s) occupying a subsidiary place in the service in the eyes of many of the

congregation, if not of the ministers: This reflects the attitude of many of those who frequented the churches were the Book of Common Prayer was read. Accordingly bishop Leslie at the Visitation held at Lisnagarvie (Lisburn) on 26 September 1638, deplores the fact that "the laity...will hear no prayer at all while divine Service is reading, they walke in the Churchyard, and when prayer is ended, they come rushing into the Church, as it were into a Play-house to hear a Sermon."<sup>29</sup> Addressing the ministers the bishop informs them that "Preaching... is grown to such esteem that it hath shuffled out of the Church, both the publique prayers which is the immediate worship of God, and this duty of Catechising: and is now accounted the sole and only service of God, the very Consummatum est of all Christianity, as if all Religion consisted in the hearing of a Sermon"<sup>30</sup>. It is not recorded that those who attended the diets of worship presided over by Presbyterian ministers were loath to enter Church till time of sermon but there seems little doubt that that Scots like their English Puritan fellow settlers had a predilection for the preaching of the Word than for prayers.

A practice of the Scots settlers of the time was for the men to cover the head during the proclamation of the Word and a common posture during worship was "the lifting of the eyes to Heaven, the spreading out of the hands, the knocking of the breast, sighing and groaning..." which ceremony, according to bishop Leslie was "used by none so much as by" Presbyterians.<sup>31</sup>

Generally speaking the sermons were long and the entire service lasted from 2 - 3 hours. Blair states that during a Communion Sabbath at Bangor "when I began the sermon I was so deserted for half an hour that I was like to leave the pulpit, and desert the work of that day; but the Lord great in mercy helped me".<sup>32</sup> As well as giving some indication of the length of the sermon this account also suggests that sermons were delivered without manuscript. John Livingstone, minister at Killinchy (1630-35)

although he preached on occasion for an hour and a half and more, did not approve of long sermons and gave it as a rule "Ordinarily goe not beyond the hour".<sup>33</sup> Sermons were prepared with much heart-searching and meditation but extempore preaching was not unknown to Blair on occasion.<sup>34</sup>

The use of instrumental music in church services was uncommon outside the city of Dublin, although Sir William Brereton states that in the chapel of the Lord Primate Ussher's palace at Drogheda there was "a little pair of organs herein".<sup>35</sup> Blair records that a precentor was one of the church officials in the Kirk at Bangor, his duty being to lead the congregation in singing the psalms.<sup>36</sup> The first Scottish Psalm book of 1564 contained proper tunes, that is, there was a different tune for every one of the 150 psalms. But as many of the congregation found it difficult, if not impossible, to make themselves familiar with so many tunes, from the 1615 edition of the book onwards, a number of common tunes were introduced, making it necessary to employ names to identify them. Examples are, Abbey, Caithness, Duke's, Dundee, Elgin, French, Martyrs, New London, York and Dunfermline. The Ulster presbyterians, it may be conjectured, also make use of these common tunes, raising their voices in praise to God, "to Dundee's wild warbling measure, plaintive Martyrs worthy of the name and noble Elgin, sweetest far of Scotia's lays".

None of the contemporary writings of the period gives any account of the actual Order of Public worship. (It is a matter for regret that Sir William Brereton who has given excellent descriptions of worship in the Church of Scotland should have been so meagre in his accounts of church services when he visited Ireland in 1635, at least so far as the Northern part of the country is concerned). It may be assumed that the Order of public worship as conducted by the Scottish Presbyterian ministers in Ulster approximated to that given in the Book of Common Order. Notice, however, should be attached to bishop Leslie's question to the non-conformist preachers

during his Belfast visitation sermon of 1636, he asks, "What particular direction have ye for the order of God's service, as when you are assembled, whether the Minister should begin with praying, or preaching with reading or singing of Psalme....". All these things, he contends, "are ordered by your owne discretion, and that diversely in diverse congregations, according to the humor(sic) of the Minister", whom, he castigates, "as a Pope in his owne Parish".<sup>37</sup>

Neither Blair nor Livingstone makes any reference to the Book of Common Order in their writings and any references that are given to pulpit prayers suggests that these were not taken verbatim from it but were of a conceived or even extempore nature.<sup>38</sup> The fact that these ministers and others with many of their people returned to Scotland circa 1636 and were later charged with the introduction of harmful innovations

into the worship of the Church of Scotland<sup>39</sup> making for the abandoning of set prayers, including the Lord's prayer, the omission of the Doxology, the abolition of private prayer in the pulpit by the minister, and the disuse of the Creed at the administration of the Sacraments - all of which were equally abhorrent to the English Puritan party in Ulster - implies that these early Presbyterian ministers had been leavened by the English Puritan dislike for any ceremony however simple.

### Communion

"The Supper of the Lord", and "The Lord's Supper" are the usual designations given to the sacrament by the early Ulster Presbyterians, and invariably the word "celebrate" is used in connexion with the sacred rite.<sup>40</sup> The sacrament was celebrated from two to four times per year in each congregation.<sup>41</sup> The communion address was described as the "action sermon".<sup>42</sup> to distinguish it from any preparatory sermon. A practice soon developed of having a number of neighbouring congregations meet together for Communion. Blair of Bangor and Robert

Cunningham of Holywood assisted at each others Communion services and the "proficients in both did communicate together" on eight occasions in the year.<sup>43</sup> Bishop Leslie testifies also to this practice when he says to the Presbyterian ministers: "Christ was the sole minister of the Sacrament: you commonly have one to assist you".<sup>44</sup> Livingstone shows that inter-communion among parishes was in vogue in 1631. "We needed", he says, "not to have the communion after, for there were some nine or ten paroches within the bounds of some twenty myles or little more, wherein there were godly ministers that kept ane society together, and every one of them had communion twice in the year, and that at different times, and had two or three of the neighbouring ministers to help therat, and most of the religious people of each paroch used to resort to the communions of the rest of the Paroches".<sup>45</sup>

Unlike the present day system of receiving communion in the pews the seventeenth century Ulster Presbyterians took their places at long tables which were set in the nave of the church, in the belief that in so doing they were following the exact procedure of our Lord and His disciples in the Upper Room.<sup>46</sup> Bishop Bramhall, in somewhat cynical fashion, states that instead of an altar in the churches staffed by non-conformist preachers there was a "table ten yards long where they sat and received the Sacrament like good fellows"<sup>47</sup> drinking their pots of ale. As the whole congregation could not be accommodated at one sitting the people went up in relays to the Table. After each group had communicated there was an exhortation given by the minister. Livingstone tells how at a Communion Sabbath in Killinchy in December 1634, where he was assisted by John McClelland<sup>48</sup> of Newtownards, there were five tables and "the Lord gave me lively exhortations to them all".<sup>49</sup>

This reference to "five tables and exhortations" suggests that "table-addresses" were part

of the Communion services in Ulster as early as 1634. Some Scottish liturgiologists maintain that prior to 1645 table-addresses were unknown in Scotland.<sup>50</sup> In that year the General Assembly enjoined a short address or exhortation at each table as a substitute for a reading of the Passion story.<sup>51</sup> The introduction of the table-address in Scotland is generally held to be the work of Protesters who became the dominant party in the Church after the revolution.<sup>52</sup> John Livingstone became one of the Protesters and it may well be that the innovation of the table-addresses in Scotland owe their introduction to the return of some of the Ulster Presbyterians there during the period of religious persecution under Wentworth in the years 1636-40.

"Prefacing" is one of the features of the Communion Order mentioned by Livingstone at Killinchy<sup>53</sup> and by Blair at the Monday Thanksgiving service after Communion at Antrim.<sup>54</sup> In Scotland it seems that ministers "prefaced" at all Sunday services. Alexander Henderson in his description of the Scottish service circa 1640 says that it was the custom of ministers to "preface a little for the quickening and up-lifting of the hearts of the people "before the prayer of confession and thanksgiving."<sup>55</sup> Doubtless a similar practice was continued in Ulster. This "prefacing" W.M. Millan suggests, was a short address on something like the lines of the Exhortation before the Confession in the Book of Common Prayer.<sup>56</sup> Blair sums up his "preface" at the Antrim Communion Thanksgiving thus: "I promised a blessing from God unto them that would seek it, and open their hearts unto it, seeing neither art nor industry had any place or part in this work". Blair also explains that he had to preach extempore on this occasion because of the non-arrival of Robert Bryce minister of Broadisland (Ballycarry).<sup>57</sup>

Bishop Leslie records that these early Presbyterians celebrated the Sacrament in the morning, that they used leavened bread and did not have a double consecration of the elements.<sup>58</sup> A double consecration of the bread and wine was an English Puritan or Independent innovation

which Robert Baillie asserts they inherited from the Brownists, and was based on the precedent of our Lord at the Last Supper, when He blessed both bread and wine.<sup>59</sup>

Blair at the commencement of his ministry in Ulster had some difficulty with his patron, Lord Clandeboy, who wished, following the practice of the established church in England, to receive the elements kneeling. Blair fresh from Scotland and with Presbyterian objections to the Five Articles of Perth - especially that of kneeling at the reception of the bread and wine - uppermost in his mind, refused to countenance this. In fact, objection to kneeling at the act of reception of the wafer and cup was the chief disputing point between bishop and the early Scots ministers as indicated by Leslie's polemical pamphlet, An Answer to Certain objections made against the Orders of our Church, Especially Kneeling at the Communion.<sup>60</sup> Clandeboy's pew joined to the upper end of the Table, he offered not to kneel if permitted to receive the elements in his pew. To this compromise Blair agreed though he soon regretted his decision.<sup>61</sup> It is often stated that Dr. Chalmers of the Free Church of Scotland was the first to introduce the practice of receiving communion in the pews to Presbyterians, in the year 1819.<sup>62</sup> There is an isolated case of it happening in Ulster in 1623.

The early Presbyterian ministers in Ulster followed the lead of the Reformed Church on the continent and the Church of Scotland in their method of partaking of the sacred elements, i.e., the minister first partook of the bread and wine<sup>63</sup> then passed the elements to the next person seated at the Table. This is demonstrably clear from Livingstone's statement concerning a celebration of Communion at Killinchy in December 1634. "I had forgott to communicate myself till the last table was almost ended, and I thought it a great mercy of God that sat put me in remembrance, whereas I had forgotten it so long".<sup>64</sup> This contrasts with the present practice where people are served first, then the elders, and the

minister last, the underlying idea of this seems to be in 'honour preferring one another'.

In connexion with the Communion season there was a service of Preparation on the Saturday afternoon.<sup>64</sup> The Saturday "sermon" was also the occasion on which those who were under discipline of the Kirk-session were called upon "to confess their scandells before the congregation and being penitent were then admitted to Communion".<sup>65</sup>

On the afternoon of the Communion Sabbath it was customary to hold a service of Thanksgiving.<sup>66</sup> Soon it also became common to hold a service of Thanksgiving on the Monday following. The explanation for the start of the Monday service is this. The great monthly meeting held at Antrim after the Sixmilewater revival of 1625, began on the Friday with a series of sermons and lectures on biblical subjects and continued on Saturday, culminating with the celebration of the sacrament on the Sunday; but because of the reluctance of the people to leave for home after the Sunday services the innovation of an extra service of Thanksgiving on Monday morning was begun. From Blair's autobiography the following outline of the service may be given: Prefacing; Prayer; Scripture Reading; Sermon, Prayer.<sup>67</sup> Henderson states in his description of Communion services in Scotland circa. 1640 that after the Thanksgiving on the Sunday afternoon the congregation "doe return according to advertisement the next Monday morning, to another sermon so that so solemn an action may be as solemnly concluded".<sup>68</sup> The first mention of such a service occurs at Kirk of Shotts in June 1630, when a vast concord of people was so thrilled with the preaching of John Livingstone that they, as in the case of their brethren at Antrim, continued their devotions throughout the Sunday night and requested Livingstone to preach to them again on the Monday. Blair was also present at this Communion season and with the experience of the Antrim communions behind him may well have prevailed upon Livingstone to agree to the crowd's demands for another service..<sup>69</sup>

Fasting before Communion was quite customary among the early Ulster presbyterians, and it was neither specifically affirmed nor denied by the Reformers, by the Book of Common Order or Acts of Assembly. Blair notes that in 1604 as a young man he attended at Communion service at Irvine, and desired to communicate but was unwilling to do so because "having gotten my breakfast I durst not, for it was the generally received opinion that the Sacrament behoved to be received fasting".<sup>70</sup> Bishop Leslie in his description of the practices of the non-conforming clergy in his diocese questions their scriptural authority for coming fasting to Communion.<sup>71</sup> Livingstone makes it quite plain that fasting was a common practice among those who frequented the great monthly meeting at Antrim.<sup>72</sup>

### Baptism

Indiscriminate baptism is not a charge which can be levelled at the early Presbyterian ministers in Ulster. Prior to the baptism the parents of the child were conferred with, exhorted and instructed as the situation demanded.<sup>73</sup> The usual practice was for baptism to be administered in church after the sermon, and generally on the first Sunday after the birth of the child,<sup>74</sup> although bishop Leslie claims that the place of baptism before or after sermon was left to the decision of each individual minister.<sup>75</sup> After their deposition by the bishops in 1632 the Presbyterian ministers continued to preach and administer the sacraments in private houses and barns. A son born to the Livingstones on 30 June 1636 was baptised the next day, after sermon, by Blair, in the home of Livingstone's mother-in-law at Malone (Belfast).<sup>76</sup> Here it should be noted that it was the circumstances of the time which forced the ministers to resort to "private" baptism and that it was after service of worship, which included an exposition of the Word, that the rite was administered. Their objection to private baptism of children in cases of necessity was commented upon by bishop Leslie in his Visitation

strictures.<sup>77</sup> As might be expected there is not direct reference to the Order of Baptism as set forth in the Book of Common Order (1564), in the writings of the early Presbyterian ministers. From bishop Leslie it is learned that they did not use the sign of the Cross and that baptism was by aspersion (sprinkling).<sup>78</sup>

### Fasts and Days of Humiliation

Fasting was regarded by the early Reformers as an authorised feature of congregational life and as a lawful means of profitable discipline,<sup>79</sup> and later editions of the Book of Common Order contain an Order for a General Fast. These fasts and days of humiliation were held at times of national anxiety or when a local calamity happened. Blair reports that there was a period of unfavourable weather for harvesting in 1624 and that the rains threatened to ruin the whole harvest of cereal crops. "Whereupon we resolved solemnly, by humiliation and fasting a whole day, to seek His face to avert the threatened famine". The days following the fast the weather cleared and for two whole days the people laboured without intermission to save the crops. During which time Blair and two neighbouring ministers continued their supplications.<sup>80</sup>

### Marriage

Robert Blair got married during his sojourn in Ulster and while he and his fellow ministers must have officiated at the marriages of members of their flocks there is no mention of marriage ceremonies in their writings. The Scottish custom was for marriages to take place always in church and generally on the Sunday. Bishop Leslie's remarks in his tract shows that such was also the practice of these Presbyterians in Ulster. The bishop charges the Presbyterians with making use of the ceremony of joining hands in marriage and the pronouncing of words not commanded in Holy Scripture, adding that it was left to the discretion of the local minister whether the marriage ceremony was performed before or after sermon.<sup>81</sup>

ere the Presbyterians were going beyond the Order of  
e Book of Common Order which limits the celebration  
marriage to before sermon and does not contain a  
bric to the effect that the bride and groom were to  
in hands at the taking of the vows, nor any reference  
a declaration that the couple are now man and wife.  
McMillan, however, has pointed out that in Scotland  
was customary for the parties being married to join  
nds.<sup>82</sup> The absence of the declaration may be explained  
the fact that "consent makes the marriage" and it  
simply the duty of the church to bless the marriage.<sup>83</sup>

### Visitation of the Sick

Blair gives the following account of his visitation  
the Sick. One evening "I began with prayer, and  
ereafter expounded the doctrine of Christ's temptat-  
ns, closing with prayer and singing of a psalm, and  
ter that did the like upon another passage of  
cripture, and after that another, still intermixing  
ayer and singing till towards the morning".<sup>84</sup> Blair  
o states that in such visitation he offered prayer upon  
knees.<sup>85</sup>

### Burial of the Dead

There is no information available as to what  
ppened at the burial of the dead in either the works  
the Presbyterian ministers or of the writings of their  
eligious opponents. But it may be assumed that the direct  
ions of the Book of Common Order were generally followed:  
the corpse is reverently brought to the grave, accompanied  
with the congregation without any further ceremonies, which  
ng buried the minister - if he be present, and required -  
eth to the church, if it be not far off, and maketh  
one comfortable exhortation to the people touching death,  
and resurrection".

## Holy Days and Festivals

According to bishop Leslie the Presbyterian ministers in Ulster were utterly opposed to Holy Days and Saints Days.<sup>86</sup> James Hamilton probably expressed the attitude of all his Presbyterian brethren to such days when disputing with the bishop concerning the Collect in the Prayer Book for Christmas Day, he said, "It were better not to observe a day which hath been superstitiously doted upon for many years, yea, regarded more than God's Sabbath, than to say expressly in our book, this day was Christ born".<sup>87</sup>

**The Order for Excommunication  
and Public Repentance**

The Book of Common Order contains Orders for Excommunication and Public Repentance. The Order for Public Repentance was meant for those who though not excommunicated had given offence to the Church. The Order required the suppliant to be admitted to public repentance by the minister and elders and to confess his crimes before the congregation. Blair, describes such an instance - one of many - which took place in the Kirk at Bangor in 1624. "He came to me confessing his sin with many tears, and desired to be admitted to the public professing of his repentance. The elders, being acquainted with this, required him to appear, which he did, sore weeping, several days, to the great edification of the whole congregation".<sup>88</sup> Later a young man not being amenable to the discipline of the Bangor Kirk Session appealed to bishop Echlin and this brought the Session's discipline to naught.<sup>89</sup>

Livingstone records that the Killinchy Kirk-Session met weekly and dealt with people who "fell into notorious publick scandals", and that both in "private and public" prevailed upon them to confess their scandals before the congregation, at the Saturday sermon before communion, after which they were admitted to the Sacrament.<sup>90</sup> Livingstone goes on to state that the Session's method of dealing with those who would not come before the

Session, or those who having come, refused to confess their faults before the congregation, was to read their names and scandal and impenitency out before the congregation, and to debar them from communion.<sup>91</sup> It is quite likely that the Order for Excommunication used by Livingstone was based on the Book of Common Order. Bishop Leslie writing in 1637 seems to imply that this aspect of Presbyterian discipline was no longer enforced, for he says "You used to injoyne penance and to receive penitents in a white sheet", the use of the white sheet one argues is as much a ceremony as the Anglican wearing of a surplice by the clergyman.<sup>92</sup>

### The Pulpit Dress of Ministers

By order of the Lord Deputy, Wentworth, on 28th November 1633, the "Dean, Dignatories, and Prebendaries of the Church were ordered to wear "surplices, and hoods, according to their various degrees, during service and sermons".<sup>93</sup> That the Presbyterian ministers in the North of Ireland wore gowns for the conduct of public worship is revealed in the remarks of Lady Clandeboy at a service in Bangor where she heard James Hamilton preach for the first time. After the service her Ladyship was pleased to compliment him thus: "James, I think your gown and pulpit become you well; I will bestow the gown and my Lord (if he will be advised by me) shall bestow the pulpit". Both of which were soon performed by his settlement in the parish of Ballywalter.<sup>94</sup> Evidence that this was a black Geneva preaching gown and not a surplice may be drawn from bishop Leslie's comment that the kingdom of God consists not in whether the congregation sits or kneels at Communion or whether it is a "white garment or black"<sup>95</sup> one that is worn. The implication being that Presbyterians contended for sitting at Communion and the wearing of a black gown, while the Anglican custom was that of kneeling at Communion and the wearing of a white surplice.

## III

Within a few months of the first meeting of the Presbytery at Carrickfergus in 1642, requests came pouring in from Scots residing in Ballymena, Antrim, Carncastle, Templepatrick, Carrickfergus, Larne and Belfast in the diocese of Connor for the formation of Kirk-sessions; and from Ballywalter, Bangor, Holywood, Donaghadee, Newtownards Killyleagh and Comber in the diocese of Down. In these and other areas were the Presbytery's writ did run, conformist clergy who insisted on celebrating the sacraments according to the English Prayer-book and administered private baptisms and performed private marriages were reproved; and if <sup>96</sup> recalcitrant silenced.

This aversion on the part of Presbyterians in Ulster to the English Prayer-book and its ceremonies and dislike detailed liturgical worship was something they had in common with some Scottish Presbyterians and English Puritans and which it may be said, crystallised in the issue by the Westminster Divines in 1644, on the authority of the English parliament of a Directory for the Public Worship of God. The Directory which contented itself with giving general directions for worship, was drawn up with the express intention of superceding the Prayer-book and designed for use in all churches throughout the three kingdoms. All of which being acceptable to the Ulster Presbyterians set the scene for the introduction and acceptance of the Directory by the Presbytery in 1647.<sup>97</sup>

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Sir Jas Hamilton "made it his business to bring very learned and pious ministers out of Scotland and planted all the parishes of his estate (which were six) with such; communicated with them, maintained them liberally; received even their reproofs submissively." The six parishes referred to were Killyleagh, Bangor, Killinchy, Craigavad, Holywood, Ballyhalbert and Dundonald.

Hamilton manuscripts, ed. T.K. Lowry, 34-5; Belfast 1867.

Sir Hugh Montgomery of the Ards "brought over at first two or three chaplains with him" for the parishes of Newtownards, Greyabbey and Donaghadee; Montgomery Manuscripts ed. G. Hill Belfast 1969, 55,61. Lord Ochiltree brought over a minister with him as early as 1611, to his estate in Co. Tyrone; Carew manuscripts, 1603-24, London 1867-73, 77. Sir Hugh Clotworthy of Antrim is also attributed with having brought ministers from England and Scotland; History of the Church of Ireland, ed.W.A. Phillips, Oxford,

The articles of Perth prescribed (1) Kneeling at Communion; (2) Private Communion for the Sick; (3) Private Baptism where necessary; (4) General Observance of Christmas, Good Friday, Easter, Ascension and Whitsunday; (5) Confirmation by Bishops; All these were common practices in use in the Church of England and the established Church in Ireland.

Bishop Echlin, in a self-exculpatory letter to the Lord Justices, April 1632, on the issue of nonconformity in his diocese (though he suspected the Scots ministers of nonconformity) maintains "I did not remove them as they were preaching to large congregations, and for little money; besides, I hoped to reform them." Calendar of State Papers, Ireland 1625-30,661-2

Robert Blair of Bangor states that Bishop Echlin, knowing of his antipathy to episcopacy, said on the matter of his ordination, "Whatever you account of episcopacy, yet I know you account a presbyter to have divine warrant; will you not receive ordination from Mr Cunningham (Holywood) and the adjacent brethren, and let me come in amongst you in no other relation than a presbyter." "This", adds Blair, "I could not refuse, and so the matter was performed." R. Blair, Autobiography, ed.T. McCrie, Wodrow Socy 1848, 58-9

Bishop Echlin, for his part, states that there was no sign of nonconformity in Blair when he was ordained deacon and presbyter in 1623, Cal.S.P. Ire. 1625-30,661-2 John Livingstone of Killinchy records in 1630 when he came to Ulster that Bishop Echlin was unwilling to ordain him and he was ordained at Rathmullan, Donegal, by a number of neighbouring ministers by imposition of hands, Bishop Knox being present; and in the Service book used (The Book of Common Prayer), all the passages which he might have questioned, had already been marked out by others; R. Wodrow, Select Biographies, ed. W.K. Tweedie (Wodrow Society, 1845-47), i.141. The most that can be said is that the form of Ordination used satisfied both the bishops and the Scottish Presbyterian ministers.

Blair, op.cit. 51  
Cal.S.P. Ire. 1633-17, 87

6. Wodrow Biographies,51

8. H. Leslie, A Treatise of the Authority of the Church...Together with an Answer to certain Objections made against the Orders of our Church, espec. kneeling at Communion, Dublin 1637, 87-8
9. Wodrow, Biographies, I:142.
10. Blair, Livingstone, Geo. Dunbar and Josias Welsh were suspended in 1631; reinstated almost immediately, suspended in 1632 and reinstated for six months in 1634. Welsh died in June 1634, and Livingstone was silenced in May 1635. Jas Cunningham, John Ridge, John McClelland, David Kennedy, Edward Brice and Henry Calvert were deposed in 1636.
11. "We went on teaching the people; only propter famam, I went not up the pulpit, but stood by the precentor." Blair, op.cit.98
12. Blair, Livingstone and other ministers with members of their flock sailed from Carrickfergus for America on 5 Sept 1636. Bishop Leslie knew of their intention to leave Ulster for the New World. In his sermon at the visitation of his diocese in Belfast, 10 August 1633 he refers to the impending departure of the Presbyterians thus: "It is said that when Cain was cast out from the presence of God (that is, from his Church, and the place of his worship), he went and dwelt in the land of Nod; so you, when you are cast out of the Church, are preparing to go and dwell in the land of Noddies, and it is strange the sides of the ship can containe them; who cannot be kept within the pale of the Church." Leslie, Treatise, 106. J.S. Reid explains the meaning of the bishop's allusion to the land of Noddies thus: "Noddy is an old word for simpletons, so the bishop's wretched witticism 'the land of Noddies', is not very complimentary to his native country." Reid takes 'Noddies' to refer to Bishop Leslie's native land of Scotland, but by the "land of Noddies" he is implying the land of America! (History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland Belfast 1867, I .195)

Bishop Bramhall's comment on the Presbyterians' attempts to reach the New World is even more caustic: "The ring leaders of our non-conformists were all embarked for New England, but their faith not being answer to their zeal, they returned and are now in Scotland." (Letter to Archbishop Laud, June 7, 1637; Cal.S.P.Ire., 1633 160)

13. John Livingstone writes: "in Oct 1641, the Rebellion broke out in land. Many of the religious people in the North of Ireland had left in the year 1637, when the deposed ministers were forced out of it by persecutors sent out to apprehend them. Others left it in the year 1641 when the Deputy (Wentworth) urged upon all the Scots in Ireland an oath abjuring the National Covenant of Scotland and so they were fain of that stroak of the rebellion. Many of those that took the oath were murthered by the rebels." (Wodrow, op.cit., I.165)
14. R. Baillie, Letters and Journals, ed.D. 15. Blair, op.cit.148; Wodrow, Laing (Bannatyne Club 1841-2), I.249 Biographies, I.158
16. P. Adair, A True Narrative of the Rise & Progress of the Pres.Chur in Ireland, ed. W.D. Killen, Belfast 1866, 93.
17. Many examples of such variations are given in W. McMillan, The Worship of the Scottish Reformed Church 1550-1638, Dunfermline 1831 passim
18. G.W. Sprott, The Worship of the Church during the Covenanting Period 1631-61, Edinburgh 1893, 6
19. Leslie, op.cit., 90; the Psalm Book was the usual designation for

O. Alexander Henderson refers to "our Psalme Book, penned by our divine Reformers and declines to set down any other forms of prayer those contained therein." Baillie, op.cit.II.2

Reid, op.cit. I.527

21. Blair, op.cit.71; Wodrow, op.cit;  
W.D. Bailie, Six Mile Water Revival of 1625, Newcastle 1976, 14-16

A. Henderson, Govt & Order of the Church of Scotland, 1641, note 14

Blair, op.cit. 59 24. ibid 25 ibid 26 ibid,130

W.McMillan, op.cit.,14 28. Blair, op.cit. 132

H. Leslie, A speech Delivered at the Visitation of Downe & Connor, held at Lisnagarvey the 26th Sept 1638, London 1639,4

Leslie, ibid 2; the bishop here charges the Presbyterian ministers neglecting to catechise. This can only mean that they refused to use the Catechism of the episcopal church.

Leslie, op.cit. 76-7; the bishop may here be referring to what happened at some places during the Six Mile Water Revival of 1625. The Presbyterian ministers also refer to the phenomena occurring among the worshippers.

Blair, op.cit., 61 33. Woodrow, Biographies, I.289

Blair, op.cit., 85

W. Brereton, "Travels of Sir Wm Brereton in Ireland, 1635" in Illustrations of Irish History and Topography, mainly of the 17th centyr, London 1904, ed. C. Litton Falkiner

Blair, 98 37. Leslie, 40. The word "humor" has changed its meaning since 17th century when it meant "whim"

Blair, 133 writes "O what melting in the prayer with great length and liberty"

McMillan, op.cit. 71; Baillie, op.cit. I. 249

Blair 61,64,99,101; Wodrow, I.143, 166 41. Blair 64; Wodrow 143

Blair 61 43. ibid 64 44. Leslie, op.cit. 69  
Wodrow, op.cit. I.143 46. McMillan, op.cit., 163

Cal.S.P. Ire 1633-47, 87

John McClelland, a schoolmaster at Newtownards, "being approven by the honest ministers in the Countie of Down, preached oft publickly in their Kirks"; Wodrow, op.cit. I.331 Bishop Leslie in his Visitation address in 1636, complained that "Some domminees here amongst you, who having no ordination to our calling, have taken upon themselves to preach, and preach I know not what, even the foolish visions of their owne heart." op.cit., 23

Wodrow, I.283 50. G.B. Burnett, Holy Communion in the Reformed Church of Scotland, Edinburgh 1960, 130

A. Peterkin, Book of the Universal Kirk, Edinburgh 1838, 421

Burnett, op.cit. 130 53 Wodrow, I.283 5<sup>3</sup><sub>4</sub> Blair, 85

Henderson, op.cit., 12 56. McMillan, op.cit., 124

Blair 85 58. Leslie, 69

Cf H. Davies, The Worship of the English Puritans, Westminster 1948  
208

60. Blair 61. 61. Burnett, op.cit 269 62 Henderson 18.  
 63. Wodrow 283 64. ibid 285 65. ibid 142 66. Blair, 84  
 67. ibid 85 68. Henderson, op.cit 20 69. Blair 90  
 70. Ibid 7. Blair was twelve years of age when he became a communicant and John Livingstone was under 14 when he received his first and trembling communion from Patrick Simpson of Stirling; Wodrow op.cit I.132  
 71. Leslie 69. 72. Wodrow I.143  
 73. Blair 66: "I baptized none till I first conferred with the father and exhorted and instructed him, as need required."  
 74. Wodrow, I.154; Henderson, Op.cit. 14 75. Leslie 40  
 76. Wodrow I,154 77. Leslie 88 78. ibid 87 79. Calvin: Inst II,  
 80. Blair 69 81. Leslie 76 82. McMillan, op.cit.267 II,  
 83. ibid 84. Blair 68 85. Leslie 87 87 Reid, op.cit I.51  
 88. Blair 68 89. ibid 69 90. Wodrow I.142 91. ibid  
 92. Leslie 76. 93. Cal.S.P. Ire 133-47 32  
 94. Hamilton Manuscripts 74 95. Leslie 190  
 96. Adair, Narrative, Leslie (J.B.) and Swarney (H.B.), Biographical Succession lists of the Clergy of the Diocese of Down, Enniskillen 1936, 183; Bishops Leslie & Bramhall escaped possible censure by Presbytery as they had left for England shortly after the onset of the Irish Rebellion 1641  
 97. ibid 137
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The Rev Wm Desmond Bailie holds the degrees of M.A. (Trinity College, Dublin), B.D. (Queen's University, Belfast), Ph.D (Q.U.B.) and the Honorary Degree of D.D. (The Presbyterian Theological Faculty, Ireland). He was Convenor of the Presbyterian Historical Society for eleven years (1967-1978), and has continued to make notable contributions to the Society. The present article represents the Robert Allen Memorial Lecture, delivered in Union College, Belfast on the 7th May, 1987. We are grateful to the Society for permission to publish.

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